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G-MB - 271/63  
10 May 1963  
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, China and Asian Satellites Division, OCI

ATTENTION:

FROM: Chief, CIA/PID (NPIC)

SUBJECT: Area Study, Laos

REFERENCE: Requirement No. OCI/13/63 (Project No. C 288-63)

CITE:

1. In response to Requirement No. OCI/13/63 (C 288-63), a study was made of available aerial photography of the Tchepone, Laos (16 42N - 106 13E) area and of the area between Routes 9 and 12 in Laos. The purpose of this study was to report on the decline in the number of buildings in the Tchepone area and to make a search for any unusual activity in the area between Routes 9 and 12.

2. Tchepone Area (16 42N - 106 13E): The following information was derived from a comparison of

In order to more clearly present the findings of this study, the Tchepone area was broken into four (4) smaller areas:

a. Area 1, Tchepone Fort, located .2nm west of the Route 9 highway bridge over the Se Bang Hieng River at 16 42N - 106 13E. This area previously contained 36 buildings and was surrounded by a well defined trench system and firing pits. The area presently contains approximately 14 buildings, the previously well defined trench system is in an advanced state of deterioration and is becoming overgrown with grass and other vegetation.

b. Area 2, located .5nm east of the Route 9 highway bridge over the Se Bang Hieng River at 16 42N - 106 14E. This area previously contained 19 large and 8 small buildings. Three (3)

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of the large buildings have been removed and a short personnel trench has been constructed in the area.

c. Area 3, a possible motor pool area located .4nm south of the Route 9 highway bridge consists of a walled compound containing 2 large buildings and 2 small support buildings. There has been no apparent change in this area.

d. Tchepone Airfield, located approximately 3nm NW of Tchepone at 16 43N - 106 12E. Airfield previously consisted of a 3800 x 70 feet NE/SW laterite surfaced runway, serviceable, with 2 small T-shaped support buildings adjacent to a sod parking area near the SW end of the strip. There has been no apparent change in the runway itself; however, the following changes have taken place in the immediate area: there is presently only 1 small T-shaped support building; there are approximately 6 buildings partially observed in the trees some 900 feet east of the SW end of the runway; 6 - 8 buildings partially observed by trees 600 feet west of the small support building; considerable vehicle track activity in the trees east of the runway midpoint; 2 occupied automatic weapons positions are located just east of the runway midpoint and a trench system with 6 bunkers has been constructed between the SW end of the runway and a service road leading from Route 9.

3. Activity between Routes 9 and 12: No unusual activity was observed in the area between Routes 9 and 12 or within the Ho Chi Minh Trail area. No evidence of road construction or improvement was noted. No vehicle or troop movements or concentrations were observed with the exception of a convoy on Route 12 moving SW at 17 37N - 105 45E. The Mission Coverage Index on [redacted] (NPIC/R-80/63, dated April 1963) might be of value to you in answering additional questions you may have on certain other specific areas.

4. The photo analysis on this project was performed by [redacted] CIA/PID/GMB (NPIC), who may be contacted on ext. [redacted] for any additional information.

cc: [redacted]

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